1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
A W32 Gond A W32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

133 slopes and in the Mangnar and Dantewara Mar villages there are often fine patches of sal and other evergreen trees. On the hill-tops and on slopes exhausted by shifting cultivation, high grass and stunted trees make the country monotonous to the eye and tiring through lack of shade. Where the slopes are newly cleared and have once been burnt for shifting *penda* cultivation, often a small grove of trees is left on the summit, like nothing so much as the top-knot of hair on the crown of a Maria's otherwise roughly-shaved head. But the moment you descend off the rocky plateaux you meet green glades and hurrying streams, or may feel the sudden amaze of a prospect such as that of the blue apex of the lofty Bailadila ridge seen beyond the haze of the Indrawati valley down the valley of a stream that far below the ridge between Itulnar and Hikul races due south to the Indrawati.

161 There are only between 150 and 160 villages inhabited in all this area of about 1,500 square miles, and there are only 11,500 361 Hill Marias. This means one village in every ten square miles, and less than eight persons to the square mile. In few places can you lose yourself in such solitudes.

● 635 North Bastar thus consists administratively of the Antagarh, Kondagaon and Jagdalpur tahsils, half of the Jagdalpur tahsil being south of the Indrawati, and of the portions of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris and the Dantewara tahsil north of the Indrawati.

635 In South Bastar there are the Dantewara, Bijapur and Konta tahsils, and the Sukma, Kutru, Bhopalpatnam and Kotapalli-491 Pamer zamindaris; these four zamindaris alone survive out of the seventeen or eighteen of old times. A great western road runs 134 miles from Jagdalpur through Gidam, Karli, Matawara, Bijapur and Bhopalpatnam to Timer on the Indrawati, opposite Patagudam in Chanda district, whence there is a forest road to Sironcha; branches south from Gidam and Karli run to Dantewara, with a further extension to Kameli at the foot of the Bailadila hills; north from Gidam to Barsur, and from Matawara to Kutru; and south from Bhopalpatnam to Tarlagudam on the Godavari and thence over the Latpatkandi pass into the Nugur and Albaka talugs of Madras. A great southern road runs 114 miles from Jagdalpur to Sukma and Konta. A network of forest roads of recent construction links these roads together between Tirathgarh in Jagdalpur tahsil, Katakalian, Kuakonda and Dantewara, or southward from Kuakonda to the Kolab-Sabari at Misma on the Konta road, and to Konta via the Aranpur pass, Jaggergonda and Golapalli; while Bijapur is linked to Cherla and Jaggergonda to Dummagudam, both on the Godavari. With these and other

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE III

635

BASTAR STATE—POLITICAL DIVISIONS
Scale (approx.) : 1 inch = 32 miles

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

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forest roads there are now few places in south Bastar out of reach of a motor-car, in the fair weather.

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Dantewara tahsil is a horseshoe plain between the Tangri Dongri ghats at the edge of Jagdalpur tahsil on the east, the Abujhmar mountains on the north, and the great sword-blade north and south ridge of Bailadila on the west. Its general level is about 400 feet below that of the Jagdalpur tahsil, and it is an intermediate step between the north-eastern plateau and the great plains of South Bastar. The main road descends steeply to it from Killepal and Bastanar. This Dantewara valley may almost be regarded as the fourth natural division of Bastar; though small portions of the east of Kutru zamindari and the north of Bijapur tahsil are on the same level, there is between them and Dantewara tahsil the great barrier of the Bailadila ridge, except where the narrow Indrawati valley separates the northern end of the ridge from the Abujhmar mountains.

The rest of Bastar is sometimes described as one great southern plain varying in level from 600 to 300 feet according to the proximity of the Godavari. Actually, however, there is yet another plateau to be crossed on the western road (and on its forest branches that strike off towards the Godavari) before the traveller descends on to the real Godavari plain. Its level varies from 1,100 to 900 feet (leaving out of account, in this as in all the plateaux and plains of Bastar, the frequent spurs and isolated hills). On the southern road to Konta, and on the forest roads descending from Dantewara to Konta tahsil and Sukma zamindari by the Aranpur, Koriras and Mokpal passes, on the other hand, the traveller gets at once off the northern 2,000 feet plateau, in the case of the southern road, and off the Dantewara valley level in those of the forest roads, to the Godavari or southern plain. This intermediate western plateau may be regarded as the fifth natural division, and called the Kutru-Bijapur plateau. On the north and north-west the Indrawati is its boundary, so far as Bastar is concerned, as far as the hills which begin north of Desli in Sironcha tahsil and cross the Indrawati into Bastar to form the boundary of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris; the gorge in which the Indrawati boils through these hills, the last barrier to its union with the Godavari, is sinister in its magnificence. The hills run thence south-west along the border of the two zamindaris, cross the western road a little west of Bijapur village and continue south-west to the Isalnar pass on the Nelasnar-Cherla forest road, and thence westward till they merge with the foot-hills at the southern end of the Bailadila ridge, a little north of the Aranpur pass.

This Kutru-Bijapur plateau comprises all Kutru zamindari

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

133 Madras if it had been reasonably managed. The few 'Dorla' villages are the most miserable in Bastar.

The third sub-division is the Kolab-Sabari valley from the southern slopes of the hills at the edge of the 2,000 feet plateau and the Dantewara valley plateau to the border of the Bhadrachalam taluq of Madras on the south. The northern portion of this, the Sukma zamindari, is a punchbowl ringed by the high edges of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateaux from Tulsidongri in the north-east counter-clockwise to a point in the south-west of the zamindari where the foot-hills of the Gogonda-Tikanpalli hills approach the Kolab-Sabari near Chikpalli; the hills are continued across the river and the Bastar border still counter-clockwise towards Malkangiri, and thence back to Tulsidongri. There are two small detached portions of Jagdalpur tahsil in the north of the zamindari, around Kukanar and the lower waters of the Thakawara and Kumakoleng rivers respectively. South of Sukma zamindari the valley opens out again to form the main block of Konta tahsil, including the former Bhiji zamindari, the level of which falls nearly to 250 feet above the sea by Konta at its south-east corner; here the Bastar portion of the valley is very narrow, as nearly all the south of Konta tahsil is occupied by the ranges of the Golapalli mountains which at one point reach a height of more than 2,800 feet.

132 In contrast with north Bastar, with its evergreen moist forests,
133 cool climate, abundant water-supply and often thick population,
137 south Sukma, almost all Konta, the Pamer-Kotapalli zamindari and much of south Bijapur are hot dry regions of deciduous forests, deficient water and sparse population. The rivers are short stony torrents rushing down in the monsoon to the adjacent Godavari, Talper or Kolab-Sabari, and drying up often before January. Teak is the characteristic timber tree.

635 There will be found in Appendix I a statement of the areas and
162 populations of the six tahsils and four zamindaris into which modern Bastar is divided. Each of these administrative units is called after the name of its headquarters; except Jagdalpur with a (1931) population of 10,128, the other headquarters are only villages, and not always large villages; in 1931, of the 2,442 villages in Bastar only five had populations between 2,000 and 2,500, and forty-two populations between 1,000 and 2,000.

634 Frequent mention was made in this chapter of the smaller '*pargana*' unit. The first use that I can find of this word is in Appendix IX of Glasfurd's 1862 report, in which, of the forty-three non-zamindari sub-divisions of Bastar, seventeen are called *parganas* and twenty-six *garhs*. In Elliot's 1855 report the names are given of forty-eight *garhs* and nine taluqs into which the non-zamindari